

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-6, 8-11, 13-18, 20-28, 36, and 41-48 are pending in the present application, Claims 1, 3, 4-6, 8-11, 13-18, 20-25, 27, 28, 30, 32, 34-36, and 41-45 having been amended, and Claims 2, 7, 12, 19, 29-35, and 37-40 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Support for the amendments to Claims 1, 3, 4-6, 8-11, 13-18, 20-25, 27, 28, 30, 32, 34-36, 42, and 44 is believed to be self-evident from the originally filed application. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 11, 14, 28, and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C §103(a) as unpatentable over Alaimo et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,614,811, hereinafter Alaimo) in view of Denman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,745,240, hereinafter Denman); Claims 21, 3-5, 13, 15, and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Alaimo in view of Denman, and further in view of Duvvury (U.S. Patent No. 6,917,626); Claims 6, 7, 16-19, 23-25, and 33-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Alaimo in view of Denman and Duvvury, and further in view of Cacerano et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,308,205, hereinafter Cacerano).

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the courtesy of an interview extended to Applicant's representative on February 12, 2008. During the interview, differences between the present invention and the applied art, and the rejections noted in the outstanding Office Action were discussed. No agreement was reached pending the Examiner's further review when a response is filed.

Claim 1 is amended to more clearly describe and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. Particularly, "peripheral device" is replaced with "image forming device." Amended Claim 1 recites,

An image forming device configured to be connected to a plurality of other image forming devices via a network, said image forming device comprising:

a management unit configured to manage the plurality of other image forming devices and said image forming device; and

a selection unit, provided in said image forming device, configured to select a managing image forming device to manage the plurality of other image forming devices and said image forming device,

wherein the managing image forming device is selected by said selection unit out of a group including the plurality of other image forming devices and said image forming device.

The combination of Alaimo and Denman do not disclose or suggest every element of amended Claim 1.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Office takes the position that the controller card and other cards shown in Fig. 3 of Alaimo equate to the previously claimed “peripheral device.” However, Alaimo does not disclose or suggest image forming devices as described in Claim 1.

Alaimo describes a telecommunication access device. There is no reason to modify the cards shown in Fig. 3 of Alaimo to be image forming devices. A person of ordinary skill in the art would not modify the cards shown in Fig. 3 of Alaimo to be an image forming device. Alaimo is unrelated to the invention defined by amended Claim 1. Any proposed modification that would change the basic operating principle of a reference is not an obvious one. See In re Ratti, 123 USPQ 349, 352 (CCPA 1959).

Furthermore, Denman does not cure any deficiencies in Alaimo. Denman describes a method and system for configuring a massively parallel processing system. (Col. 1, lines 28-30.) Denman describes an invention that uses a voting process to logically configure the parallel processing system, where each node in the system votes for a node that it believes is

the best candidate to control the configuration process, and the controlling node, also called a coordinator, selects the configuration and distributes the information to all other nodes in the system. However, this voting system of Denman does not involve image forming devices.

The nodes shown in Fig. 2A of Denman are not image forming devices as described by Claim

1. Furthermore, Denman does not disclose or suggest that one image forming device manages other image forming devices. Denman does not disclose or suggest that an image forming device manages a plurality of other image forming devices. Denman does not disclose or suggest that an image forming device selects a managing image forming device to manage the plurality of image forming devices.

While Denman mentions that a printer can be coupled to the computer (250), it is evident that Denman is not directed to the control or operation of various image forming devices, and never discloses that the printer mentioned in column 4 has the features recited in the claims of the present application.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1 (and any claims dependent thereon) patentably distinguish over Alaimo and Denman, taken alone or in proper combination. Claims 11 and 28 recite elements similar to those of Claim 1. Claims 11 and 28 (and any claims dependent thereon) patentably distinguish over Alaimo and Denman, taken alone or in proper combination, for at least the reasons stated for Claim 1.

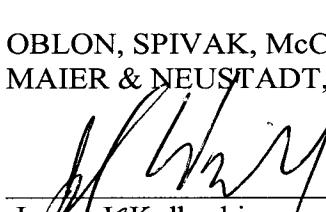
Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of Claim 21 as being unpatentable over Alaimo, Denman, and Duvvury. Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 21 patentably distinguishes over Alaimo and Denman for the reasons stated for Claim 1. Duvvury does not cure the deficiencies in Alaimo and Denman. Duvvury was relied upon to disclose setting default URLs of web servers, and does not disclose or suggest an image forming device that manages a plurality of image forming devices, and where the plurality of image forming devices decides which of the plurality of image forming devices manages the others.

Addressing each of the further rejections, each of the further rejections is also traversed by the present response as no teachings in any of the further cited references to Carcerano can overcome the above-noted deficiencies of Alaimo, Denman, and Duvvury. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that those rejections be withdrawn for similar reasons as discussed above.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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